DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 359 242 TM 020 011

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TITLE A Comparative Study of Dialogue and Response Journals.
PUB DATE Apr 93
NOTE 31p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association (Atlanta, GA, April 12-16, 1993).
PUB TYPE Reports - Research/Technical (143) -- Speeches/Conference Papers (150)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Comparative Analysis; *Dialog Journals; Educational Environment; *Feedback; *Graduate Students; Higher Education; Interviews; *Literacy Education; Questionnaires; *Student Journals; Student Reaction; *Teacher Student Relationship

ABSTRACT

This study compared dialogue and response journal formats. The participants were members of a graduate class for literacy educators. Completing a journal containing dialogue and response entries was one assignment for this class. Data came from student journals, interviews, and questionnaires. The integration of findings from these sources indicated that students comparably completed each type of entry and believed the two formats served similar functions, e.g. exploring selected topics and/or connecting them with a classroom environment, improving their writing, reading critically, and influencing classroom practice. However, students preferred the dialogue format. They felt the feedback promoted collegial consultation, improved task engagement, and affirmed their feelings and ideas. These possibilities depended upon honest exchanges between a student and the instructor. Consequently, the linkage of the journal activity to the wider classroom culture was underscored. This wider culture can either enhance or undermine the potential of a journal activity. (A table shows paired sample t-tests of questionnaire items.) (Author)

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ED359242

A Comparative Study of Dialogue and Response Journals

Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association

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TM020011

Abstract

This study compared dialogue and response journal formats. The participants were members of a graduate class for literacy educators. Completing a journal containing dialogue and response entries was one assignment for this class.

Data came from student journals, interviews, and questionnaires. The integration of findings from these sources indicated that students comparably completed each type of entry and believed the two formats served similar functions, e.g. exploring selected topics and/or connecting them with a classroom environment, improving their writing, reading critically, and influencing classroom practice. However, students preferred the dialogue format. They felt the feedback promoted collegial consultation, improved task engagement, and affirmed their feelings and ideas. These possibilities depended upon honest exchanges between a student and the instructor. Consequently, the linkage of the journal activity to the wider classroom culture was underscored. This wider culture can either enhance or undermine the potential of a journal activity.

A Comparative Study of Dialogue and Response Journals

Teacher educators face many challenges. One challenge is to employ instructional practices consistent with the recommendations they advance. In other words, teacher educators have the obligation to provide pedagogical models rather than simply propose pedagogical ideas. In this vision, the actions of teacher educators provide ongoing examples of viable practices. In many instances, these practices could be identical to those proposed for school settings. For example, teacher educators could use cooperative learning groups when discussing the tenets of cooperative learning. If portfolios are proposed as viable assessment alternatives, teacher educators could use portfolios for assessing their students. Consequently, students not only explore a concept but also experience it. Over time, modeling a diverse range of options might counter Goodlad's (1990) finding that field experiences for teachers fail to sufficiently capture the range of potentially useful curricular and instructional principles.

Additionally, the practices selected by teacher educators, like those proposed for classroom teachers, should have a strong theoretical base. This combined challenge provides a direction for this study. Specifically, this study explores the use of response and dialogue journals by students in a graduate literacy methods course. Journal writing is one of many practices appropriately recommended for use by classroom teachers and often employed by teacher educators. Several bodies of scholarship

justify the use of journals for various educational purposes but do not speak to their inclusion in courses for teachers. Existing research does, however, provide a strong basis for expecting their benefit.

First, leading language scholars (i.e. Vygotzky, 1978) argue that language exploration contributes to meaning acquisition. In other words, human beings find meaning in the world by contemplating it through language. Therefore, any attempt to extend a person's communicative involvement with ideas and concepts seems advantageous.

Second, literacy researchers, particularly those interested in the mutual benefits of writing and reading (i.e. Gambrell, 1985), specifically support the use of writing for making meaning. As Britton (1975) attests, when people write about new information and ideas they learn and understand them better.

Finally, scholars concerned with expanding specific knowledge domains confirm the advantages of journals (Fulwiler, 1987). For example, journals have been successfully used to teach history at the college level (Steffens, 1987), to engage high school students in thinking about physics (Grumbacher, 1987), to improve the writing of elementary students (Kreeft, 1984; Peyton & Seyoum, 1989), and to foster cognitive and linguistic growth of hearing impaired students (Staton, 1985).

Some documentation explores the benefits of journals for classroom teachers (Holly, 1989; Voss, 1988), but as previously mentioned, existing research does not explore the potential of

journals for the training of literacy educators. If the same benefits emerge from this context as found in others, journals could provide literacy educators the opportunity to explore literacy development and instruction and, as a result of this written contemplation, generate a personal understanding of these ideas. However, at this point, the possibility is mere speculation. Therefore, one purpose of this study is to determine the legitimacy of using journals to train literacy educators.

Journals, however, are not unidimensional. They maintain certain features such as student control of topics and emphasis of meaning over mechanics, but can vary in format and intentions (Pappas, Kiefer, & Levstik, 1990; Walley, 1991). For example, a student might keep a learning log, documenting the concepts and knowledge acquired in a particular course. Others might share their thoughts with a teacher in a dialogue journal. Students might explore their reactions about the texts they're reading in a book response journal. Finally, students might liken their journal to a diary. Surprisingly, existing findings offer compelling evidence for the use of journals, but fail to compare variations that could emerge from different journal choices. Therefore, a second intention of this study is to compare dialogue and response journals. These formats seem intuitively appropriate for teacher training, but existing research does not provide any direction for choosing either or both.

Therefore, this study extends existing knowledge in two ways. First, it applies journal writing to the training of literacy educators, a context not previously examined. Second, it initiates a comparison of dialogue and response journal formats. From these general intentions to explore the appropriateness of journals for the training of literacy teachers and to compare dialogue and response journals, several related questions evolved: (1) What attitudes and perceptions did students develop towards dialogue and response journals? (2) What trends defined the content of their entries? (3) What purposes did the entries serve? and (4) Upon completion, what attributes defined the two formats?

Method

Setting

The larger setting for this study was a northeastern university. The specific setting was a semester long reading methods course for graduate students. The first author was the instructor for this class. As stated in the syllabus, the course was designed to provide a forum for updating and clarifying in-service and returning teachers' knowledge about literacy. The course addressed three goals: (1) extending the student's understanding of the literacy process and its developmental emergence, (2) exploring the implications of this understanding for literacy instruction, and (3) underscoring the relatedness of literacy to other subject areas.

Participants

Members of this graduate class participated in this study. The majority of students were classroom teachers. The remaining students had bachelor degrees and were seeking teacher certification. Keeping a journal was one of the course assignments. In addition, students participated in professional discussion groups based on their reading of three articles related to literacy and completed a Professional Activity Packet (See Roe, 1993, for an explanation of this activity.) For the journal assignment, students were directed to discuss the ideas they read and explored in class in a way that deepened their personal understanding of literacy education. The dialogue journal provided a "chat" between the graduate student and his or her professor. The response journal, however, was a private exploration. From the onset, students knew this activity was the focus of a research project.

Data collection

Data came from 3 sources: (1) student journals, (2) interviews, and (3) questionnaires. The use of these multiple methods provided triangulation (Denzin, 1970).

Journals. The students were divided into two groups. One group began with dialogue journals, the second with response journals. At the end of five weeks, the groups switched to the other format. Students completing dialogue entries submitted their journals at the weekly class session. The journal was returned the next session with the professor's feedback.

Students in the response format were expected to write weekly entries, but their entries were not collected weekly. Ultimately, each student completed five entries for each journal format. The entire journal containing 10 entries and a self-evaluation was collected towards the conclusion of the course. This journal accounted for 25% of the course grade. With the students' permission, the journals were kept for subsequent examination.

Questionnaire. All class members anonymously completed a Likert scaled questionnaire. The questionnaire focused on the students' perceptions of the journal assignment and the two journal formats. Using a scale of one to four, students responded to the following items for each journal format: The (response/dialogue) journal (1) helped me understand difficult material, (2) caused me to be more reflective, (3) clarified my role as a teacher, (4) increased my understanding of course concepts, (5) increased my development as a teacher, (6) helped me understand the social context of teaching, (7) extended the time I spent with course ideas, and (8) I would want to do a (response/dialogue) journal in other classes. Additionally, and using the same scale, students were asked whether they preferred a response journal, dialogue journal, or not keeping a journal.

Interviews. A subgroup participated in individually conducted open-ended interviews. These interviews occurred after the semester ended. Several questions provided a general framework for these interviews:

1. What was your reaction when you first knew that keeping a journal was part of this course's requirements?

2. What was your approach for completing the entries for the dialogue and response journals? Were the two journal types equally time consuming? Were they equally engaging? Were they equally demanding?

3. How would you compare the entries you made for your dialogue and response journals? Did you shift the way you wrote the entry or its general content?,

4. If I were to again require students to keep journals, what suggestions would you offer?

5. What was your reaction after completing the journal assignment?

6. Do you have any other comments about dialogue and response journals that my questions didn't cover?

In general, the intention of each interview was to understand the students' perceptions of the journal assignment and the two journal formats. With the students' permission, the interviews were tape recorded. The interviews were subsequently transcribed and entered into Ethnograph, a computer program designed to assist with the analysis of qualitative data.

Data analysis

Data analysis occurred in several overlapping stages. Therefore, the separate explanation of its components reflects organizational convenience rather than a linear and divided approach to data analysis.

Responses to the Likert scaled questionnaires were analyzed using SPSSPC. Descriptive statistics were generated for each statement. Next, similarities and differences of the responses were analyzed using paired sample t-tests. Paired sample t-tests allowed the selection of comparisons of specific interest for this study.

The content of the journal entries was examined. An initial reading of the journals generated a general impression of their content. At this stage, the number of pages for each format and a summary of their content were listed. Next, the examination became more specific. At this stage, thought segments were determined (Squire, 1964). Labels were assigned to these segments, e.g. posing questions, discussing a concept, and applying information to actual or envisioned classroom experiences. Ultimately, this data led to a tabulation of categories, their defining attributes, and examples from the journal entries. In addition, the total number of categories and the percentage of the total categories further clarified the journal content of dialogue and response formats for each student and for the group.

The data obtained from the student interviews were analyzed using Spradley's (1980) guidelines for domain analysis. Codes were established to catalogue individual responses. The codes were developed during the analysis and expanded as additional responses warranted a different characterization. The reading and rereading of comparably coded segments for each interview

questions followed by the same process across questions led to an integrated understanding of the respondents' perceptions of the journal assignment and its two formats.

The availability of multiple data sources does not guarantee the intended benefit of triangulation. Therefore, the overarching obligation of data analysis was to refrain from giving so much credibility to one data source that disconfirming evidence from another was downplayed or ignored. This required giving equal consideration to the types of information acquired. The data were continually searched for consistencies and inconsistencies. The conclusions stem from an interweaving of episodic support and analysis.

Results

The results of this study supported previous research on the benefits of using journals. As one student said, "This is really a personal experience or personal journey for yourself through the course - to think about things. It was a nice journey to take."

For these students, the journey for completing a dialogue and response entry was comparable. First, students engaged the same general process in making the dialogue and response entries. For Bruce, the process went as follows:

> I would initially take some time and at least mentally review in my mind for either a few moments or an hour or whatever it took everything that I had done up to that point in sort of

scanning for a topic that seemed suitable. That was kind of important because a wrong topic would frustrate your writing.

Lisa employed a comparable strategy:

> As I was reading the chapter I kind of thought over it in terms of whether there were any points I could use to respond to in the journal, and if I couldn't think of anything based on the chapter then I started searching further afield and focusing on things in the news or looking for another article or something that I could write about. I don't think my approach in writing varied that much depending upon whether or not you were going to be responding to it immediately.

In general, each student crafted a procedure that allowed him or her to hone in on a topic and resolve how to articulate it. This procedure remained constant for each format. Cindy called this getting to "the thoughtful part."

In addition, the combined data indicated the response and dialogue journal entries served similar functions.

Journal functions

Connect with classrooms. Most often, the journals allowed students to connect the ideas from the course with their classrooms or, for those students not yet teaching, hypothetical settings. Excerpts from student journals typify this occurrence. Jan, a classroom teacher wrote the following as part of one entry in her response journal:

> The chapter on extending literacy best addressed my interests as a teacher. Most of the social studies textbooks that are

content appropriate for my class are very difficult for my students to read. The recommendation to teach comprehension strategies in content areas makes a lot of sense. I seem to be spending a lot of energy organizing information for the kids and providing lost of drill and practice. What I really need to do is to teach them how to organize the material themselves.

Jan made comparable links between course topics and her classroom context in her dialogue journal:

When I ask for a written response to something we have read, two of my most capable students complain they don't understand what to do. Usually they end up doing something or writing something completely out of the ball park. I explain that the question is an "author and you" type and that I expect a response that demonstrates thought...Is it possible that more modeling is needed? I'm interested in thinking, not control, so maybe I should be willing to provide more support. Motivation is hard to call.

The following excerpt from Brent's response journal demonstrated how students not yet teaching projected ideas from the course to their use in a classroom:

I must admit I haven't truly evaluated the many ideas I've learned. At this point I'm starting a file at home in which I can include teaching ideas that I am interested in using. I will need to evaluate ideas further and use them according to specific classroom situations that arise.

A dialogue entry from Melinda's journal exhibited her speculation about classroom connections:

> A teacher must set aside time for journals in the morning and for children to write their observations about something in the classroom. The children will see how important their work is if you occasionally write a comment in their daily journals. If you can acquire parent help to write a class newsletter, that would be great, too.

Explore selected topics. Second, the journals allowed students to explore a variety of topics and clarify their ideas about them. Kristi describes this process:

> As I wrote I worked out ideas in my own mind. And I think it also asked us to think about how we could apply what we were getting from the course or the text or from other people's comments, how we would apply it to our own life and our own classwork. I think that's how I used it. It was a clarifier and actually to write it down forced you to think about things that I think that you say you're thinking about but maybe you're not. When you're writing it, just a different process goes on and then you're really thinking it...So that caused me to make it clear for myself as well. I think that was maybe the purpose.

Journal entries from Devon, an in-service teacher, and Cindy, a pre-service teacher, typify the entries:

> In the kindergarten literacy chapter, one of the concepts is that literacy activities should be based on a scaffolding

principle. I read and reread the part of the chapter dealing with this idea but I am really finding it hard to understand. Scaffolding seems like it should mean moving from easy activities to more complex activities. I think of scaffolding as activities building on another and leading towards independence. The book explains it as a kind of guided participation...I have to be missing some kind of important link here.

Devon's dialogue journal

I am intrigued by the term scaffolding. I don't know exactly what it means, but a scaffold in construction is an external structure built alongside and used to support workers and materials. Perhaps it has to with external props, support, guidelines given to the student until they can read on their own. I'm sure it will come up again and become clearer to me.

Cindy's dialogue journal

The students' control over a topic selection and its presentation had several advantages. Janet voiced this belief:

I think that I got to write about whatever I felt like. I mean if you have an assignment and it says read chapter 7, well I sit there and read chapter 7. That's not a choice. And hand in X paper on this date so that's what you do. But, all the things you read and all those things you'd like to talk about but don't, either because there's not time or because like I said it's not a crucial issue, and so that was

a time (writing the journal) that you could talk about the things that you wouldn't ordinarily bring up.

Joan offered a further explanation:

If there's something that you just feel like talking about because you're interested in it, I don't have to worry if I was wasting somebody else's time or maybe some times you feel like I'm the only one who doesn't know this so I shouldn't be bringing it up.

Lisa provided a specific example:

I know a lot of things I wrote about focused on special needs readers and that really didn't have a place in class. It wasn't really the focal point, either, but it was something I could address in the journal.

In other words, this self-determination allowed students to tailor a discussion to fit their interests and needs. Additionally, the journal environment provided a forum for exploring ideas that might have been forsaken during a class or small group discussion. The journal activity rectified students' reticence to broach topics which only pertained to them and removed their concern for monopolizing class time for personal explorations.

Most literacy methods courses address the need to consider individual needs. Certainly, teachers in training deserve the same attention to individualization. For these students, journals afforded this personalized focus.

For Joan, the writing on self-selected topics increased what some call communicative competence (Roe & Kleinsasser, 1993; Rogers, Noblit, & Ferrell, 1990). In general, communicative competence is the ability to articulate professional beliefs and explain instructional practices. Lane explained her journal's contribution to communicative competence:

> The fact that this door was open to question and to search was a tremendous experience because teaching is always you go this far and if they don't grasp it you go to something else, but suddenly I realized I don't really have to go on if I'm not satisfied. I can stick with this until we find the answers. And it (the journal) really helped me to prove to myself that it is ok to do this. My journals allowed a lot more freedom. With each one I wrote I felt a little bit more sure of what I was saying or trying to say, so it really helped.

Improve writing. In addition, these students felt the journal activity improved their writing. Joan talked about her writing becoming less "muddy" as the course progressed. Lia, for whom English was a second language, felt she gained fluency in expressing herself in written English. Barbara talked about having an initial "anxiety attack" because she wrote so infrequently. As the semester progressed, this anxiousness faded. Graves (1991) stresses the importance of writing teachers being writers themselves. The journal activity, although required, seemed to provide a comfortable and profitable

engagement with writing. This was an unexpected result for this study, but not surprising. In fact, Staton and Shuy (1988) proposed dialogue journals as a way to master written communication.

Read critically. Maintaining a critical posture towards text is important for readers (Anderson, Hiebert, Scott, & Wilkinson, 1985).. This remains true when pre and in-service teachers read professional literature. Often, teacher educators assume that students take this reflective stance. However, such is not the case. As Marie explains, "I guess I was sort of thinking you didn't question research. If it's there, it's just there. That's just it." For Lisa, the journal changed this stance. As she documented, "It (the journal) made me think more critically about the textbook which probably isn't something I would have thought super critically about before since it seemed like it was mostly research based." Andrea added that "(the journal) forces you to think rather than just passively absorbing what you're reading."

Influence classroom practice. For some students, completing the journal increased their likelihood of using journals in their classrooms. Their personal acceptance of the journal activity and its benefits partially contributed to this stance. As Joan explained, "I think they were important and that maybe having done them ourselves we are more likely to try journals with out students." Lynn concurred, suggesting another dimension: "I think as a teacher I can see more motivation for a student...it's

just a neat little way of having a conversation. So I know what I'll be carrying home over the weekend."

Dialogue preference

In spite of the comparable approaches used by students to complete each journal format and the benefits which spanned each type of entry, differences in favor of the dialogue format emerged. As initial evidence, each significant comparison of questionnaire items favored the dialogue journal (see Table 1).

Insert Table 1 about here

These differences did not favor dialogue entries for learning course information or spending more time with course ideas, but rather for understanding the role of the teacher and the context where teaching occurs. Linking these quantitative findings with their qualitative counterparts affords a richer understanding of this preference.

For these students, the feedback generated in the dialogue format added important dimensions to the journal. As Joan said, "To me the response journal was just part of my classwork, whereas the dialogue journal somebody was answering and paying attention to what you said." Beth described the general advantage: "It's nice to discuss topics of literacy with another professional."

Several specific benefits of the feedback attribute emerged. First, the students valued the insertion of another person's

thinking - the collegial consultation - that the exchange of ideas afforded. One student compared the response format to "turning your own wheels" in comparison to the dialogue format which allowed her thinking to be "stretched." As she further explained, "I sat down and I started from the same premise (as in the response journal) and it usually was when the juices got flowing that I would take a leap and hope that you would meet me at that leap. And give me your thoughts on it because I couldn't take it any further - the limits of my mind."

Kelly likened the exchange of ideas to a "mentoring" which validated some ideas, challenged others, and generally extended an individual's thinking. As she explained, "It's kind of a sounding board and this idea is sound but have you thought about this because this might influence your decision. And again, like the clarifying for me, to help me rethink some of my own ideas..." Another student, like one in Staton's study (1980), compared it to Dear Abby. As Meredith said in evaluating her journal, "Being a fairly new teacher I have many questions and often wish to seek advice." Charlotte added, "I felt that you really cared what was going on in my classroom and you helped me through some difficult times. Most schools lack the possibility for teacher interaction (Cohn, & Kottkamp, 1993). The dialogue journal provided this possibility. Students could pose questions and receive appreciated feedback. This led students to thank the instructor for her comments, ideas, and willingness to listen.

Second, students felt the feedback generated a higher level

of energy towards the assignment. As Amy explained, "After a few responses back from you I got real excited about it because I found it was a place for me to think things out and do things." Other students felt the dialogue format prevented a lackadaisical attitude towards the assignment, kept them motivated to write, and helped them maintain regularity for their writing.

Finally, students felt the feedback provided affirmation for their feelings and ideas. Kelly discussed the stress of being a teacher and the lack of response to her situation. She considers the feedback a "pat on the back. It's OK, you can feel that way. It's OK to feel that way, I can understand that, or I know there aren't enough hours in a day. If you keep thinking like this you'll be a thoughtful teacher and I think people need that kind of encouragement...Just continue to think and it's going to make a difference. The things you do and think about will make a difference. It's not praise per se, but just the validation and just the encouragement. It just feels really good." When this exchange of ideas was removed, students missed it. Amy described it as "having that little rug pulled out from me."

Students consistently voiced the advantages of exchanging ideas with the instructor. This supported Staton's (1987) belief that "the access to the teacher's mind, and to an interactive, personalized response makes the dialogue journals work" (p. 47). However, several concerns arose.

First, the possibility existed that the student's voice could be overpowered by the instructor's. To ignore status

differentials between a student and his or her instructor in a college class is naive. Therefore, recognizing the possibility that role assignment could hinder genuine conversation is important.

Second, if the student was reluctant to assume the role of an equal participant, the student could consider the instructor's comments definitive statements rather than additional points to ponder. This would reduce, if not eliminate, the student's continued reflective posture.

In this instance, the general tenor of the class, its wider environment, lessened the dichotomy between expert/novice or instructor/student and, as a result, a necessary attribute of a genuine journal event was maintained.

Various students explained how this potential pitfall was avoided. According to Cindy, "You (the instructor) respected everybody's viewpoint or whatever perspective they were coming from...You kept making it clear you wanted our thoughtful thinking. So in that case it wasn't like you the expert and me the novice."

Another student added, "It wasn't like you were judging me because I wasn't asking you to judge my thinking. It was that I want that perspective, so there wasn't really the platform for the judgment."

Kelly felt the honesty of her responses proved she felt like an equal participant. As she said, "I could share some of those things (weaknesses), so that must have meant I considered you

more of an equal during the journal exercises because I wouldn't share weaknesses with a professor. I would want to share strengths."

Diane provided a final connection between the journal activity and the class:

> We discussed so many possibilities to deal with all kinds of problems and you know we looked at reading in all different levels. I don't know how any person could think there's only one answer to anything. You had such a wide range of possibilities even with things that weren't elaborated a lot in the book...You gave me the feeling that there are lots of choices and you have to think about your choice before you make it.

In general, the dialogue journal was of particular benefit for these students. However, the context of the journal's use had the potential to strip the journal of important attributes. Specifically, students' inhibition in expressing their ideas could lessen the profit of a dialogue journal. As Peshkin (1993) reminds us, "Problem finding is a type of insight that may result from interpretation. To know what is problematic about a teacher, student, classroom, or school is to have learned something of value" (p. 26). This study unveiled a potential threat to the use of dialogue journals in a college setting. Although in this class the journal remained a viable opportunity for the consideration of ideas, teacher educators must remember that a classroom assignment is a not a bounded event. Instead,

activities, like dialogue journals, can be enhanced or undermined by the atmosphere of the wider classroom culture.

In summary, this journal activity, as Cindy previously explained, was a journey. The course guidelines provided general boundaries for the trip, but the students controlled the specific direction. Their selection of topics became stops along the way, interim destinations to explore longer and in more depth. For half of the journey, the response format, the student was a solitary traveler. During the second half of the journey, the dialogue format, the student had a companion. Importantly, the companion, although a seasoned traveler, maintained a position of invited guest. The journey remained a student's personal odyssey. As the journey ended and the last page of the journal was completed, the students reflected back on the journey. They found the entire trip informative and profitable, but the dialogue days received the most favorable reviews. As Amy concluded, "I feel the journal entries have proved to be a valuable learning experience, especially the dialogue journals. Each week, I reviewed classroom discussion and my own teaching practices, along with pertinent reading, and explored possible teaching opportunities and problems in an attempt to become a better and more educated teacher. I benefitted from the experience." Marie, in evaluating her journal, concluded with a question, "Wouldn't it be great for all of us novices to receive input on a weekly basis?"

Implications

This study affirmed these students' perception that journals are beneficial. However, while response and dialogue journals afforded comparable benefits, the dialogue journals offered more for the students. The dialogue enhanced their learning and contained a happiness quotient not inherent in the response format. This finding has more ramifications for teacher educators than for their students. In this instance, an instructor concerned with what a student learns and their feelings toward that learning would select a dialogue format. This places an onus on teacher educators to not only give journal assignments but to position themselves as co-conspirators in maximizing their benefits. Participating in a written dialogue with students requires a considerable time commitment and teacher educators often tread a precarious balance between their teaching, research, and service obligations. However, this study confirms its rewards.

Other scholars (i.e. Sarason, 1990) have explored the need to reconfigure power relations in order to improve educational opportunities. A comparable consideration emerged from this study. In this instance, the maintenance of typical power relationships in a college class could reduce if not eliminate a dialogue journal's advantage. To counter this possibility, the instructor must create an environment which nurtures a free flow of ideas.

In sum, journals seem appropriate assignments for pre and in-service teachers, but dialogue journals provide the potential for a more collaborative, apprenticeship model of teacher education. These students expressed a significant interest in doing dialogue journals for other classes. Since commonalities exist across educational settings, the study suggests the consideration of dialogue journals by other teacher educators in literacy and other disciplines.

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Table 1

Paired Sample T-Tests of Questionnaire Items

Question	Response journal	Dialogue journal
Understand difficult material		.007
Be more reflective	NS	NS
Clarify role as teacher		.001
Increase understanding of course concepts	NS	NS
Increase development as a teacher		.001
Help understand social context of teaching		.003
Extend time spent with course ideas	NS	NS
I would want to do a journal in another class	NS	.000
Total of questions		.000